

# FACT SHEET

## COEUR d'ALENE RIVER BASIN



JULY 2000

**UPDATE #7**

### ***Next Six Months Critical for Citizen Involvement***

This is the seventh fact sheet from EPA (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) about the study and cleanup of mining-related wastes in the Coeur d'Alene River Basin in northern Idaho. The study is called an RI/FS (Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study) and is being done according to the federal Superfund law (CERCLA), which regulates the cleanup of hazardous wastes.

This fact sheet describes the significant RI/FS-related activities coming up over the next six months and how you and people in your community can participate and give input on those activities.

### ***Make Sure Your Voice is Heard!***

Over the next six to nine months, major pieces of the Basin RI/FS and cleanup plan will be available for public review and comment. The draft Human Health Risk Assessment is now available for public review and comment. The draft Ecological Risk Assessment, the draft Remedial Investigation and the draft Feasibility Study will be completed by the end of the year. Each of these documents will contain information essential to making good cleanup decisions in the Basin and each will be available for public review and comment.

The coming months will be a critical time for you to give EPA your input. The information coming out and the decisions made will have significant implications for Basin communities for many years to come. By getting involved and giving us your input now, you can help make sure local issues and concerns are addressed in the final cleanup plan for the Basin.

### ***State of Idaho Wants Comments on Draft Human Health Risk Assessment***

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) recently released for public review and comment the draft Human Health Risk Assessment for the Coeur d'Alene River Basin. The assessment, funded by EPA, is a major step

forward in understanding which areas in the Basin pose health risks and will require cleanup.

The risk assessment is an evaluation of potential threats to public health

from contamination in the Basin in the absence of any cleanup actions. The goals of the risk assessment are to:

- ☐ determine the extent of heavy metal contamination that current or future residents or visitors to the Basin may come into contact with,
- ☐ evaluate potential health risks associated with exposure to contaminants,
- ☐ provide information for agencies to evaluate the need for cleanup actions,
- ☐ provide information to aid in developing cleanup criteria.

***Draft Human Health Risk Assessment Now Available for Public Review and Comment***

***Public Meeting - August 8th***

### ***You're Invited to a Public Meeting***

You are invited to attend the Citizens Advisory Committee's RI/FS Task Force meeting on August 8<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 9 pm at Canyon Elementary School (E. 27405 Schoolhouse Loop; 1.5 miles east of the Rose Lake exit off of I-90). Both IDEQ and EPA staff will be available at the meeting to answer questions about the draft Human Health Risk Assessment.

Comments on the draft risk assessment will be accepted until **September 1, 2000**. EPA's national Technical Review Workgroup for Lead is now reviewing the draft Risk Assessment and will provide its comments to IDEQ by the end of the comment period.

EPA encourages people who live in the Basin communities to learn more about the Risk Assessment by reviewing the full document or the executive summary and attending upcoming public meetings.

### ***EPA's Human Health Goal***

EPA's cleanup goal is to ensure that an individual child has less than a five percent chance of having a blood lead level above 10 micrograms per deciliter — the national level of concern for child blood lead. EPA is most concerned with protecting children under seven years old because they are particularly sensitive to the effects of lead. Currently in the Basin, roughly 15 percent of children under seven tested have blood lead levels above the national standard. Children near the age of two are the most sensitive to the effects of lead and 26 percent of two year olds tested in the Basin had blood lead levels above the standard.

The risk assessment does indicate that in order to meet EPA's health goal for children, cleanups in residential areas will be necessary in the Basin. The next step is to determine exactly where cleanups will occur and the specific level of cleanup needed to meet our goal to protect young children. These decisions, called "Risk Management" decisions, will be made after the State of Idaho and EPA have discussed the risk assessment results with people in the Basin communities and after careful consideration of the specific circumstances in the Basin.

### ***Where You Can Review the Risk Assessment***

The draft risk assessment can be reviewed at the Basin information repositories listed at the end of this fact sheet. Copies of the Draft Human Health Risk Assessment were also sent to the cities of

Mullan, Osburn, Wallace, Harrison and Coeur d'Alene and to the Shoshone and Kootenai County Commissioners.

You can also review the summary and conclusions section of the Risk Assessment on IDEQ's website:

[http://www2.state.id.us/deq/waste/cda\\_hhra.htm](http://www2.state.id.us/deq/waste/cda_hhra.htm)

Written comments on the Draft Human Health Risk Assessment should be sent by September 1<sup>st</sup> to:

**Rob Hanson**  
**Mine Waste Program Manager**  
**Department of Environmental Quality**  
**1410 N. Hilton**  
**Boise, ID 83706**

Comments may be e-mailed to Rob at [rhanson@deq.state.id.us](mailto:rhanson@deq.state.id.us)

### ***Other Important Documents Available Soon***

The following is a list of other key RI/FS documents due to come out over the next six to nine months. A public meeting and public review period will accompany each of these documents. Each document will be available at the Basin information repositories and on EPA's Basin webpage. Please note that the dates when the documents will be available to the public are approximate. You will be notified of the specific dates when the documents are available for review.

Due to the volume of information we are working with for the RI/FS, EPA is releasing portions of the RI/FS early so that we can incorporate community input into the final comprehensive RI/FS. EPA will use the input we receive on these draft documents to prepare the final RI/FS report. A formal response to comments will be prepared only for comments received during the formal public comment period for the Proposed Plan in 2001. The response to comments will be included in the Record of Decision for the Basin.

Document	Approximate Date
<b>Draft Human Health Risk Assessment</b> (State of Idaho Lead)	Now available: Comments due <b>September 1, 2000</b>
<b>Draft Ecological Risk Assessment</b> (analysis of risks to plants and animals)	Available: September 2000 Comments due: <b>October 6, 2000</b>
<b>Draft Human Health Cleanup Alternatives Analysis</b> (EPA's detailed evaluation of cleanup options for protection of human health including analysis of technologies and costs. To be combined with the Ecological Alternatives Analysis to form the Comprehensive Feasibility Study)	Available: October 2000
<b>Draft Remedial Investigation Report</b> (compilation of data describing nature and extent of contamination)	Available: November 2000
<b>Draft Ecological Cleanup Alternatives Analysis</b> (detailed evaluation of cleanup options for protection of plants and animals including analysis of technologies and costs. To be combined with the Ecological Alternatives Analysis to form the Comprehensive Feasibility Study)	Available: December 2000
<b>Comprehensive Remedial Investigation/ Feasibility Study</b> (compilation of all reports described above with public input included)	30- to 60-day formal public comment period to be announced

### Other Documents: “Technical Memos”

Besides the major documents listed above, several “technical memos” on very specific topics will be produced over the next several months. These memos will be available at the repositories and on EPA's webpage. These technical memos will not be the subject of a public comment period. Stay tuned to the Basin Newsbriefs or EPA's webpage if you are interested in these memos.

### Where to Review Documents

Harrison City Hall  
100 Frederick Street  
Harrison, ID 83833  
208-689-3212

North Idaho College Library  
1000 Garden Avenue, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
208-769-3355

Spokane Public Library  
906 West Main Avenue, Spokane, WA, 99201-0976  
509-626-5336

Wallace Public Library  
415 River Street, Wallace, ID 83873  
208-752-4571

Coeur d'Alene Field Office  
1910 Northwest Boulevard, Suite 208,  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
208-664-4588

United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency

Region 10 (ECO-081)  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101



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### ***EPA's Webpage address***

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/cda>

### ***Contacts***

If you have questions or need more information, please call Marianne Deppman, EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator at 206-553-1237 or toll free at 1-800-424-4372 or Dick Martindale EPA's Community Liaison, in Coeur d'Alene at 664-4588.

***Do you have health concerns  
about environmental contamination in  
the Coeur d'Alene River Basin?***

ATSDR will be available to talk with you  
one-on-one from 6-7 pm on August 8th at  
Canyon Elementary.



## ***ATSDR Needs the Help of Community Members in the Coeur d'Alene River Basin***

### ***Why is ATSDR working in the Basin?***

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a federal public health agency, is evaluating information about environmental contamination in the Basin. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requested that ATSDR determine whether current levels of lead in mine related wastes might be affecting the health of community members in the Basin. In May, ATSDR distributed a fact sheet about the results of two health consultations. Refer to the back of this page for information about how to obtain copies of the fact sheet or the health consultations.

### ***How is ATSDR's role in the Basin different from EPA's and Idaho DEQ's?***

Unlike EPA and Idaho DEQ, ATSDR is not a regulatory agency. ATSDR advises EPA and DEQ on the public health aspects of the site which are considered during efforts to reduce risk. ATSDR makes recommendations to EPA and other agencies when specific actions are needed to protect public health.

### ***How do ATSDR health consultations differ from human health risk assessments (HHRA's)?***

ATSDR evaluates sites to determine the possibility of current or future health effects from past, current, and future exposures to environmental contamination. ATSDR then takes appropriate public health actions to follow-up with the exposed population.

EPA and/or DEQ perform a HHRA to determine current and future exposure scenarios and possible risks associated with these scenarios. EPA and/or DEQ use the HHRA to decide what areas need to be cleaned up, the level of cleanup, and what areas should be cleaned up first.

In summary, EPA and DEQ focus on the environmental contamination and what is to be done about it. ATSDR focuses on the exposed or potentially exposed population and recommends/performs appropriate prevention and follow-up health activities. Working together, these agencies ensure that people are protected from actual or potential threats to human health from environmental contamination.

### ***What evaluation is ATSDR currently conducting?***

ATSDR is currently conducting a more extensive evaluation, a public health assessment (PHA), to determine whether current levels of lead in mine related wastes might be affecting the health of community members in the Basin. The PHA will be available for PUBLIC COMMENT by the end of 2000.

### ***How can the community help ATSDR?***

Community participation is essential in the public health assessment process. One way that the community assists ATSDR in the evaluation process is by providing their health concerns and other information about the environmental contamination.

### ***Why are the community's health concerns important?***

The health concerns that are gathered are used to help focus the PHA process, so that the community's concerns can be addressed as the evaluation is conducted and the draft report prepared.

### ***How does ATSDR gather the community's health concerns?***

ATSDR meets individually with community members so that they can provide their health concerns and any other information they might have about contaminants released in the Basin. ***ATSDR will be available to talk one-on-one with community members from 6-7 pm on August 8th at the Canyon Elementary School*** (on Schoolhouse Loop Rd.) ATSDR will also attend meetings related to the Human Health Risk Assessment to hear community concerns.

Also, community members may provide their health concerns to ATSDR by calling the toll-free number, emailing, or writing. See next back of page for details. ***All health concerns must be submitted to ATSDR by September 15, 2000.***

**Contact ATSDR via the 24 hr, toll-free number  
1-888-422-8737 (that is, 1-888-42-ATSDR):**

- ☐ To provide ATSDR with your health concerns and any other information about environmental contamination in the Basin.
- ☐ To obtain copies of the fact sheet and health consultations distributed in May 2000 or additional information about ATSDR.
- ☐ To be added to ATSDR's Coeur d'Alene River Basin mailing list, so that you might receive a copy of the draft public health assessment that will be distributed for PUBLIC COMMENT by the end of 2000.

You may also contact these ATSDR staff directly: Richard Kauffman, Senior Regional Representative in Seattle, at (206)553-2632, or Deborah Boling, ATSDR Health Assessor, at (404)639-0628.

***You may also provide your health concerns by:***

**E-mailing ATSDR:** [atsdric@cdc.gov](mailto:atsdric@cdc.gov).

**Or Writing:** Ms. Deborah Boling, Health Assessor  
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry  
1600 Clifton Road; Mail Stop E-32  
Atlanta, GA 30333

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*Include the following information:*

Name\_\_\_\_\_Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_City\_\_\_\_\_

Please include yours and your family's concerns about your health regarding possible exposure to environmental contamination in the Coeur d'Alene River Basin.

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***Or obtain additional information about ATSDR by:***  
**Visiting ATSDR's Internet Home Page:** <http://atsdr1.atsdr.cdc.gov:8080>.